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JOURNAL

OF THE

American Geographical and Statistical SOCIETY.

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PROCEEDINGS.

NINTH MEETING, April 14th, 1859. In the absence of the President, Frederick Prime, Esq., in the Chair.

On motion, the ordinary business of the Society, except the admission of new members, was suspended.

Marcus J. Boorman, Walter Underhill, Robert Ray, Jr., A. P. Robinson, Augustus F. Dow, Manton Marble, Edward Dickenson, John T. Doyle, Hon. James I. Roosevelt, Alfred W. Craven, C. E., John B. Holmes, Rev. J. W. Cumming, D. D., Charles M. Leupp, George T. Strong, F. H. Gerdes, Isaac Bernheimer, Benjamin M. Stilwell, and Francis W. Worth, were elected as Resident Members.

Hon. James Dixon, U. S. Senator, (Conn.); Edward D. Mansfield, Commissioner of Statistics, for the State of Ohio; and Washington A. Bartlett, late of the U. S. Coast Survey, were elected Corresponding Members.

John McLeod Murphy, Esq., read a paper on the "*Isthmus of Tehuantepec; its Inhabitants and Resources.*" The thanks of the Society were tendered to Mr. Murphy for his Address, and a copy requested for the Archives of the Society.

Before adjournment, Mr. Murphy took occasion to present to the Society, on behalf of His Excellency, Porfirio Diaz, Jefe Politico of Tehuantepec, a map of the State of Oaxaca, for which the thanks of the Society were directed to be returned. *Adjourned.*

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

MICRONESIA.

THE RUINS ON PONAPE, OR ASCENSION ISLAND.*

[Dr. Latham, in his "Man and His Migrations," makes the following supposition: "If the inhabited world were one large circular island; if its population were admitted to have been diffused over its surface from some single point, and if that single point were at the same time unascertained and requiring investigation, what would be the method of our inquiries? We should ask what point would give us the existing phenomena with the least amount of migration; and we should ask this upon the simple principle of not multiplying causes unnecessarily. The answer would be—the center. From the center we can people the parts about the circumference without making any line of migration longer than half a diameter; and without supposing any one of such numerous lines to be longer than the other."]

Taking the center as it is, Dr. Latham selects six extreme points as starting places, and from there traces back the lines of migration, by physical affinities, and affinities of language, toward a common center. These six points are Terra del Fuego, Van Dieman's Land, Easter Island, which is the farthest extremity of Polynesia, Cape of Good Hope, England, and Ireland.

Of course this is pure hypothesis, and I do not quote it as having any scientific value. But it is curious that the common center of these various lines would be "somewhere in intra-tropical Asia"—near the spot toward which history and tradition point as the seat of the common origin of the human race.

Dr. Latham's imaginary line from Easter Island, runs through the Caroline and Pelew groups, to the Philippines, and thence to the south-eastern portion of the Asiatic Continent, on the Indo-Chinese Peninsula; i. e., he supposes that the Caroline Islands were peopled from the Malayan Peninsula, by way of the Philippines.

Pickering makes a suggestion regarding waves of

* An Address by L. H. Gulick, M. D., of Micronesia, read by Rev. Jos. P. Thompson, D. D., before the American Geographical and Statistical Society on the 18th December, 1856.